

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION (OE) WORKING GROUP
Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Office
Scituate, MA
10:00am to 4:30pm
11 February 2004

MEETING SUMMARY

ACTION: Upcoming meetings

March 25, 2004 (Presentation by Beth Daley, Boston Globe)

April 7, 2004

May 14, 2004

ACTION: Alternates

Each member is to determine an alternate to attend Working Group meetings for which the member will not be present.

ACTION: Data gathering tasks for WG members

Acquire sample Action Plans for use in developing particular strategies. Those that have been used for other sanctuaries can probably be mirrored. (The Globe provided very good coverage of the Florida Keys and was impressed by their outreach program. OE needs to learn how they joined/organized groups.)

National Marine Sanctuaries:

- Stellwagen Bank (MA)
- Thunder Bay (MI)
- Monitor (NC)
- Gray's Reef (GA)
- Florida Keys
- Flower Garden Banks (TX, LA)
- Channel Islands (CA)
- Monterey Bay (CA)
- Gulf of the Farallones (CA)
- Cordell Bank (CA)
- Olympic Coast (WA)
- Hawaiian Islands—Humpback Whale
- Fagatele Bay (American Samoa)
- Northwestern Hawaiian Islands [proposed]

(Web sites for the above sanctuaries can be found at <http://www.sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov/oms/oms.html>)

Also gather information on what other working groups have done regarding education and outreach, and include in documentation.

This material should be sent to Anne and Dick before the next meeting on March 25, 2004.

Working Group Attendees (February 11, 2004):

Name	WG Seat / Affiliation	Attendance
Richard Wheeler, Chair	CCMNH and Ed, WG Chair	Present
Anne Smrcina, Staff Lead	SBNMS, Ed WG Team Lead	Present
William Spitzer	NEAq – Exhibits/Programs	Present
Tony LaCasse	NEAq – Media Relations Manager	
Maureen McConnell	Museum of Science – Exhibits Planner	Present
Andrea Thorrold	COSEE Coordinator – Woods Hole	Present
Jack Crowley	MME / UMass Dart. / New Bedford Oceanarium	Present
Nicola Micozzi	Science Supervisor – Plymouth Public Schools	Present
Tracy Hart	Marine Exc. Assoc. – Maine Sea Grant	Present
Jennifer McCann	URI Coastal Research Ctr. / RI Sea Grant	Present
Lou Gainor	Capt. Nautical Talk – WATD Radio	Present
Charles Rasak	Creative Director – Creative Resources Group	
Wendy Northcross	Exec. Dir. – Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce	
Jennifer Ferguson-Mitchell	Public Affairs Deputy Dir. – IFAW	
Sue Moynihan	Dir. of Int. & Cult.Res.Mgmt – CC Natl Seashore	Present
Lt. Dean Jones	Public Affairs Officer – US Coast Guard, Dist.1	
Jay Michaud	Fisherman / Mar. Surv / MA Lobstermens Assoc.	
Cynde Bieman	Sr. Naturalist – Ocean All. / Cp. Ann Whale Watch	
Bill Fairbanks	Pres. Hbr. Moor. Serv. / MA Marine Trades Assoc.	
Christopher Bailey	Intl Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW)	Present
Amy Thomas	US Coast Guard, Dist.1	Present
Phyllis Cahaly	US Coast Guard, Dist.1	Present
Kristen McMenamy	MarketingManager	Present
<i>Technical Advisors</i>		
Beth Daley	Boston Globe	Conf. Call
Margaret McLaughlin	capecorps.org Volunteer Center	Present

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Craig McDonald welcomed the group and provided a brief summary of current SBNMS concerns, stating that the working groups are key to addressing these issues. Most important to the OE group is that the public does not know that the Sanctuary exists.

Dick Wheeler emphasized that networking is currently a very powerful tool, exemplified by the Public Outreach and Education Working Group.

Anne Smrcina gave an overview of the meeting agenda and provided the group with meeting materials.

WORKING GROUP PROCESS (SBNMS)

Dick Wheeler is the facilitator of the OE Working Group. All rules/regulations regarding SBNMS will be addressed by Anne Smrcina.

The Working Groups are part of a larger process, in which the overall mission is resource protection. The process of the Management Plan Review will involve the following:

1. Public scoping process
2. Prioritization of issues
3. 12 Working Groups who develop Action Plans
4. Action Plans go to SAC
5. Action Plans then go to Superintendent.
6. Draft Management Plan is then developed
7. Management Plan goes out for public comment
8. Final Management Plan is developed
9. Final Management Plan goes out for public comment
10. Final Management Plan released

GROUND RULES FOR THE OE WORKING GROUP

Each member is to determine an alternate to attend Working Group meetings for which the member will not be present.

The group should strive to come to consensus on the Action Plans, but if all parties cannot be satisfied with a particular plan, rationales “for” and “against” particular issues will be written into the plan and forwarded to the Advisory Council.

Sanctuary messages will evolve from some of the work from the other Working Groups. The job of the OE group is to determine the best tools to use, and to determine how to effectively partner. For example, the group should determine if it would be useful to focus efforts directly on user groups, with regard to name recognition.

PROBLEM STATEMENTS: ISSUES OF CONCERN

The two primary issues of concern as determined from the public scoping comments are:

1. Low name recognition for SBNMS.
2. Need for better information dissemination to the public and user groups through leveraged partnerships.

Successful participation occurred through public meetings and written comments submitted. The group needs to use this information (see Management Plan Review Working Group Problem Statements, Public Outreach and Education section, available at

<http://stellwagen.nos.noaa.gov/management/mpr/workinggroups/educwg.html>)

Issues

There is a need to provide a better mechanism to obtain more public participation. For example, times of day can be an issue as many people will not be able to attend during working hours.

The group needs to determine “why” it is important to promote Stellwagen. For example, the public scoping comments state that the tuna industry does not support the use of federal funds to raise public awareness of the Sanctuary beyond existing activities. The group agreed that this was not an acceptable issue. Sound reasons for promoting the Sanctuary, however, are need to counter these types of arguments.

The SBNMS name is an issue, because it is long and difficult. In developing a new name, keep in mind that anything can become branded as long as it is repeated over and over.

Currently, the Sanctuary is very two dimensional. One possibility for creating three dimensional visibility is development of an IMAX movie.

National Marine Sanctuaries have a public relations department at the national level which is active. However, Stellwagen is not a high priority. Headquarters will provide support, but Stellwagen needs to conduct its own PR work.

Comments

Pertaining to education, it is important to educate at the elementary level, so that children will be empowered to make critical decisions later. And, there is a critical window coming up, as all teachers need to be recertified by June 17. One option is to provide a course for teachers on-line, so as to reach the entire country. Teachers are a very important target. Finally, by marketing Stellwagen to school children as opposed to other sanctuaries, it becomes a poster child for the greater effort.

The effort is not only for Massachusetts, but for a multi-state region. The “Gulf of Maine Times” is a publication focused on the gulf (a very large area) and the communities, and it reaches the general public. It appears to be an effective publication that is not general education, or propaganda, but something in between.

The user groups need to be defined. Currently included are whale watching boats, the Aquarium (providing posters), boaters, the diving community, the fishing community and cruise ships.

There is currently a national Certification Standards effort underway, to train naturalists staffed on boats. California already has a program in place to train volunteers for such staffing.

PRESENTATION – “THE NEWSWORTHY STORY”

Beth Daley of the Boston Globe, who could not be present, was brought into the discussion group by conference call.

Generating public interest:

Beth Daley indicated that there is a lack of visibility for Stellwagen and that it is perceived as just a name, not an entity. The public does not really know its role. For the public to take notice (as well as for the Globe to take interest), unique and discrete topics should be the focus. The Sanctuary is a very big topic, but shipwrecks, for example, are a single topic of great interest for the public. Also keep in mind that history is almost always a topic of great interest. This could be regarding species, shipwrecks, or just about anything. It can be very important to know a bit of history before talking to a reporter.

Controversial issues:

Beth also stressed that Stellwagen should not shy away from controversial issues. They can work in the Sanctuary’s favor. Items that are being debated should probably be made public sooner rather than later. For example, if there are plans to apply restrictions on the area, it is best to publicize this ahead of time rather than implementing the restrictions and providing further reason for people to become angry.

Acquiring media coverage:

In order to get a press release through the publishing process, and/or to capture the Globe’s attention, it simply needs to be unique and interesting. Do not spend too much time on it, because if a reporter is interested, they will call back for more details. About two paragraphs should be enough to capture the topic. Also, a two week advanced submission is very helpful, especially if it is something that will require research. However, a breaking news story could be same day. It is also recommended to create some sort of deadline to expedite the process.

Beth also suggests that Stellwagen choose about five of the most interesting topics and take them to various smaller papers. For these community-based papers, it would be wise to focus on the impact and/or relationship of Stellwagen with land, and relate how it is important to individual communities.

Developing relationships with reporters can be very advantageous. Utilizing the smaller papers is an opportunity to begin developing these relationships. And, if there is an inaccuracy in an article, simply call the reporter. The key here is to “be nice.” A correction can be made, or possibly a different spin in the next article can be arranged.

Also, it was noted that the Providence Journal published an insert about a regional issue at no cost. The Boston Globe's Newspaper in Education supplement, “The Saltwater Sanctuary,” written largely by the sanctuary, was also printed at no cost to the sanctuary for the 10,000 run (the sanctuary paid for extra copies of site use). The Boston Globe typically reserves all additional inserts in the regular paper for promotional material, but Beth states that it *might* be possible to get a special supplement.

PRESENTATION – LEVERAGING VOLUNTEERS

Margaret McLaughlin with CapeCorps provided an overview of the organization, and made suggestions for leveraging volunteers in support of Stellwagen.

CapeCorps is a six volunteer staffed organization that matches volunteers with nonprofits, and is dedicated to support community-based organizations, houses of worship, government agencies and public-minded businesses from Provincetown to Bourne.

Volunteerism is growing substantially because people are being asked. Volunteers are from all walks of life, and the trend continues despite the economy.

There are typically three motivators for volunteers:

1. Achievement – e.g. unsatisfied with current job
2. Affiliation – e.g. unemployed, retired, kids looking to join a positive group
3. Job training – e.g. looking for work and need training

Margaret suggests looking into any group that partners with public schools, and invite students to join in activities, such as fundraising events. It can be very beneficial to involve youths in activities that have an impact on the community. For example, they might write letters to the Coast Guard asking them how they are involved with Stellwagen. It is important for youth to be involved outside the classroom. The youth, schools and nonprofits can have a positive impact on the community together.

Also, a group needs to look at how volunteers can interact with the organization, without being used in a comparable staff job, as there can be legal issues. And volunteers need to be treated very well, so that they remain. Include them as part of the staff, and let them know how they fit in. Help them to know your mission and strategic plan. Develop a written volunteer job description, and provide rewards. Volunteers do not need to be restricted to only direct services, but can take on a wide range of tasks (e.g. committee boards, consulting). But do not take on a volunteer that can't be used, as it can lead to bad publicity.

Discussion

Dick suggests there is an untapped reservoir of volunteers—those that would love to be involved, but can't afford the out-of-pocket expenses, such as mileage. Margaret states that there should not be a salary

involved, however compensation for travel is fine. The idea is to keep it clean so that no legal problems arise. CapeCore is attempting to acquire Value Cards that would enable volunteers to get discounts around town.

Nick suggests that there are over 1 million students in Massachusetts. In order to reach out to several states, a mass marketing effort is needed. It might be possible to acquire services from a professional marketing firm at no cost who can develop an effort to reach out on a large regional level, possibly through use of the internet. Also, Stellwagen needs an identity, rather than being seen as just an outline on a map. A suggestion for developing an identity is to create Sanctuary characters similar to Nemo.

GOAL STATEMENT

To develop a set of action plans to enhance public awareness and understanding of the sanctuary and its resources, and encourage responsible stewardship.

Target Groups

1. Target outreach to user groups who affect the Sanctuary directly.
2. Support broad marine education in order to build constituency for conservation.
3. Develop an infrastructure to include affiliate organizations and volunteers.

FINAL COMMENTS

Information should be collected on what other working groups have done regarding outreach and education, and this should be included in the documentation.

Meeting adjourned at 3:45pm.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Sanctuary System
Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary
175 Edward Foster Rd.
Scituate, MA 02055
(781) 545-8026 FAX: (781) 545-8036

Outreach and Education Working Group

AGENDA

11 January 2004

10:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

SBNMS Headquarters

Scituate, MA

- 10:00 – 10:30 Welcome, Introductions and Adoption of Agenda
Richard Wheeler, CCMNH and Ed WG Chair
Anne Smrcina, SBNMS, Ed WG Team Lead
- 10:30 – 11:30 Working Group Process (SBNMS)
Ground Rules
- 11:30 – 12:30 WQ Problem Statements: Issues of Concern
Review of Scoping Comments
Review of Prioritized Issues
Discussion
- 12:30 – 1:30 *Working Lunch*
A New Approach to Recruitment of Volunteers --
Margaret McLaughlin, capecorps.org
- 1:30 – 2:00 The Newsworthy Story -- Beth Daley, Boston Globe (invited)
- 2:00 -- 2:30 Development of a Goal Statement
- 2:30 -- 4:00 Issues of Concern: Discussion Continued
- 4:00 – 4:15 W.G. Logistics (Meeting Dates, Technical Advisors)
- 4:15 – 4:30 Next Steps and Summary
- 4:00 Adjourn